

QH
7
E135
N14

E A N H S BULLETIN



1000 (approx)

CONTENTS

A birdwatching safari in Northeastern Province	Part 2	- - - - -	38
A Bird Atlas for Uganda	- - - - -	- - - - -	96
Birds and the drought at Miotoni, Karen	- - - - -	- - - - -	96
Side-striped Jackal	- - - - -	- - - - -	100
The Nandi Bear	- - - - -	- - - - -	103
A plant taking advantage of ants	- - - - -	- - - - -	104
More about Hornbills and Monkeys	- - - - -	- - - - -	105
Breeding of Verreaux's Eagle Owl prevented by Crows	- - - - -	- - - - -	105
The one-day world record count for birds	- - - - -	- - - - -	106
Review	- - - - -	- - - - -	106
Society visit to Elsamere Conservation Centre	- - - - -	- - - - -	108
Warning: Lions in Aberdare National Park	- - - - -	- - - - -	109
Society notices	- - - - -	- - - - -	109
Society Functions	- - - - -	- - - - -	110

A BIRDWATCHING SAFARI IN NORTH-EASTERN PROVINCE PART II

Part I appeared in the last issue of the EANHIS Bulletin. It contained information on the landscape, climate, natural history, people and safari conditions in North-Eastern Province.

BIRDWATCHING

The weather was dry during our visit and had been for some time. Most of the bushes and trees had shed their leaves and the grass was brown, giving the landscape a typically parched appearance. The only green vegetation were some indeciduous woody species and the riverine vegetation along the Tana and Daua rivers.

Our main difficulty was lack of transport to get out of the towns quickly into the bush before it became too hot. There were no cars officially for hire. At Garissa we came to an arrangement with Mr Salim at the Mobil Petrol Station, who kindly hired us his Land Rover and driver four times to take us several kilometres out of town; the car would then leave us and we would return slowly on foot.

The lack of local transport and the ubiquity of bandits were our main problems. A lesser, and social problem was that some people mistook our binoculars for cameras and resented them.

Every day, except for the last day, we went for a bird walk lasting usually 2 - 3 hours (minimum 1 and maximum 4½ hours); when possible, we went for a second walk. Because of first needing food and particularly tea, it was usually 7.15 am or later before we left our abodes. We usually walked fairly quickly for a few kilometres straight out of the town and through the decreasingly overgrazed environs into the bush. We then walked in a semicircle, looking out for birds (and bandits) before returning, hot and thirsty, to try to identify the birds we were unsure of, helped by cups of welcome Somali chai (tea). The books used were Williams & Arlott (1980), Roberts (1978), Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952 & 1955), Britton (1980) and Backhurst (1970). At Mandera the District Wildlife Warden warned us against walking even a couple of kilometres out of the town because of the security situation, so we saw few birds there (unrecorded in Table 2) and we left the next morning for Nairobi.

At Garissa we first saw many of the birds typical of the dry bush in North-Eastern Province: the grey Fischer's Starling seen in all the towns; the beautiful Somali Bee-eater darting from a low bush to catch insects; the small long-tailed Namaqua Dove; the Crested Francolin; the White-browed Scrub Robin constantly displaying to itself on the ground with a wings out and tail fanned routine; the ground-living Rosy-patched Shrike who had a melodious call; the red breasted Hunter's Sunbird, and the Red-billed and Von der Decken's Hornbills. At a gravel-pit along the road to Mado Gashi some six kilometres north-east of the bridge, we saw on August 2 the Cream-coloured Courser, a pair of which we saw later outside El Wak with a chick. Near this gravel-pit at dusk we spotted a Heuglin's Courser motionless and partly hidden by branches in the poor light, identified by its pattern of a triple-line necklace; and the next evening we watched a female Heuglin's Bustard walking with stateliness between the bushes, unaware of our presence.

In our one evening at Mado Gashi we walked along the river-side vegetation to the wide, dry river bed. We saw many species and several different shrikes, including the Brubru hunting for insects in a tree.

A spectacular habitat in Wajir was the Guguf Pond near Wajir High School. From 7.30 to 8.15 am on August 6, we watched thousands of Black-faced Sandgrouse flying in to drink and then leaving. When Rosalie returned the next morning at 7.45 am to take a photograph, there were only a few of these birds, probably due to the slight drizzle earlier that morning.

The day-trip to Giriftu on August 8 was undertaken only by Rosalie, since Adan preceded her to El Wak after one night at Wajir. It was a busy day with

little time for bird-watching, since the purpose was to assess two students at the Pastoral Training Centre. Walking through the bush trailed by the four armed askaris accompanying the government Land Rover was not an ideal situation for observing birds, but several species were seen.

The most interesting part of our time at El Wak was spent at the manyatta, ten kilometres into the bush. Here we saw the Hoopoe with its distinctive long upright crest, the Somali Golden-breasted Bunting, a Grey Wren Warbler, and a small group of Red-fronted Warblers busily hunting in a bush for insects.

At Rhamu we saw two beautiful Carmine Bee-eaters on the back of a camel who was drinking in the river Daua and in the shambas nearby there were a few White-winged Doves, whose distribution just enters Kenya here. In the bush we saw a well-camouflaged adult Spotted Thicknee with a full-grown young, and both the Green Wood Hoopoe and the Abyssinian Scimitarbill.

On our return from this most interesting bird safari, we tried to identify our queried birds by comparing our field descriptions with the specimen collection at the National Museum in Nairobi. We were disappointed to realise that our supposed great extension of the range of two sunbirds was due to mis-identification and that the many seed-eaters with white rumps seen on the bare flats just south of Giriftu were, according to Mr Cunningham-van Someren, the museum ornithologist, somehow a race of the Yellow-rumped Seed eater and not a first record in Kenya of the White-rumped Seed-eater.

Table 2 at the end of this article records the 95 species of whose identification we were certain, listed under the six places where we birdwatched. This fairly low number is due partly to the uniformity of the bushland habitat; to few species of water birds being seen at the aquatic habitats briefly visited; to the absence of Palaearctic migrants in August and of local migrants during the dry season; to omission of a few species seen only while travelling; and to difficulty in identifying with certainty larks, small brown and greyish flycatchers, weavers, birds of prey, some doves, and a honeyguide seen alongside the Tana at Garissa. So most of these are omitted from the table. 20 new records were made for the Kenya Bird Atlas in the quarter degree squares containing Garissa, El Wak and Rhamu.

BREEDING RECORDS

Recorded by us both:

- 1 Cream-coloured Courser *Cursorius cursor*
Two were seen with a chick alongside the main road a few kilometres north of El Wak on August 11. The chick was mottled brown and blackish on the crown and back, with a slightly paler neck and a pale horizontal band below the eye. It crouched motionless in the *Aristida* grass for several minutes while the two adults waited nearby...
- 2 Red-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis niger*
 - a At Wajir in the bush near the Wildlife Conservation and Management Department station on August 7, a male was seen entering a nest twice while another male was seen four times to enter another nest about two metres away. Both nests were in an *Acacia* tree.
 - b At Rhamu on August 13 - 15, they were seen building nests and perching nearby.
- 3 White-browed Sparrow Weaver *Plocepasser mahali*
At Rhamu a bird was seen on August 14 building a nest in an *Acacia* tree.

Recorded by Adan:

- 4 Marabou Stork
Over fifty nests were seen in December 1983 built at 15 metres and more above the ground on tall trees close together along the west bank of the Tana River opposite Garissa. A naked young bird was observed in each of four nests built at the tops of trees, where they were exposed to the glaring sun. No incubating birds were noticed.
Adan remembers having seen the following when a child:
- 5 Yellow-necked Spurfowl *Francolinus leucoscepus*
Eggs and young were seen in ground nests under bushes.

6 Vulturine Guineafowl

Eggs and young are remembered in ground nests under bushes during a rainy season.

7 Red-billed Hornbill

Several nesting sites were seen in holes in tree trunks, where an adult bird would bring food for another adult and young inside.

NOTES ON TABLE 2

The nomenclature and reference numbers used are those in the *Check-list of the Birds of Kenya*, Britton (Ed) 1980.

The six columns are for the six places where we bird-watched. In each column is recorded the abundance of each species as estimated for the whole visit, according to the following key. Numbers are approximate:

A:	1 -	2	birds
B:	3 -	6	"
C:	7 -	20	"
D:	21 -	100	"
E:	101 -	1000	"
F:	1000		"

The number of birds of each sex is recorded in a few cases. "m" = male; "f" = female. For example, "B 4f" indicates that 4 females and no males were seen, so the abundance category is B.

The Giriftu column is the only column where birds seen when travelling in a vehicle are noted. The road from Wajir to Giriftu is in Kenya Bird Atlas Square 41B; the road north of Giriftu, travelled on for about 10 km in mid-afternoon, is in Square 29D; while Giriftu itself lies on the boundary of these two squares. Therefore, "29D", "41B" and "Gir." are entered in the Giriftu column to show the locality or localities where each species was seen.

Birds heard but not seen are excluded

A few additional species for Garissa were seen by Adan in early September 1983 when he returned for a short visit. These are:

Yellow-necked Spurfowl, Spotted Thicknee and Brubru.

They are marked in the table by *.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our main thanks go to those who helped to make the safari more enjoyable and comfortable by having one or both of us to stay:

Garissa: Mr A.A. Abdi, Bank clerk.

Wajir: Mr and Mrs M.A. Yusuf, District Range Officer.

El Wak: Mr and Mrs H.M. Mohamed, pastoralists,

Mr and Mrs H.I. Ibrahim, Range student at Egerton College,
Mr I. Alio, trader.

Rhamu: Mrs Carol Deane-Whyte, National Christian Council of Kenya.

We are grateful to two ornithologists: Mr G.R. Cunningham-van Someren for allowing us to use the Bird Room at the National Museum in Nairobi and for his help there with identifications; and to Dr Adrian D. Lewis, Vice Chairman of the EANHES, for supplying us before we set out with an up-to-date list of all species recorded for the quarter degree squares in which Garissa, Wajir and El Wak occur. This enabled us to know, and to celebrate, when we made a new record. Since our return he has encouraged us to write this report. Back at Egerton College, we thank Dr N.W. Nyandat for improvements in the draft of this contribution, which we hope will be of interest to bird enthusiasts and of use to intending travellers in this little-visited but intriguing quarter of Kenya.

TABLE 2

BIRDS IDENTIFIED

		GARISSA	MADO GASHI	WAJIR	GIRIFTU	EL WAK	RHAMU
Kenya Bird Atlas Square		65 B	53 A	42 A	29 D 41 B	30 B	19 A
Visited by		RMO AMA	RMO AMA	RMO AMA	RMO	RMO AMA	RMO AMA
Dates visited, 1983		July 29 - Aug. 4	Aug. 4-5	Aug. 5-9	Aug. 8	Aug. 9-13	Aug. 13-16
4 Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>			D			
27 Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>						A juv.
34 Great White Egret	<i>Egretta alba</i>	A					
42 Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>	A					
49 Marabou	<i>Leptoptilos crumeniferus</i>	D	C	D	C Gir.	D	D
50 Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>	D					
54 Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopica</i>	B		D			
55 African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>	C					
61 Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>			A			C
88 Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>						A
90 White-headed Vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>					A	
101 Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>					A	
133 Pale Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax poliopterus</i>	A		A		A	A
163 Pygmy Falcon	<i>Polihierax semitorquatus</i>					A	
175 Yellow-necked Spurfowl	<i>Francolinus leucoscepus</i>	A *					
182 Crested Francolin	<i>F. sephaena</i>	A				B	B

		GARISSA	NADO	GASHI	WAJIR	GIRIFTU	EL WAK	RHAMU
219	Buff-crested Bustard							
		Eupodotis ruficrista	A 1f			A 1f 41B	B 4f	
222	Heuglin's Bustard							
		Neotis heuglini	A 1f					
244	Crowned Plover							
		Vanellus coronatus			B	A 41B	B	B
249	Spur-winged Plover							
		V. spinosus	C	B	B			B
251	Black-headed Plover							
		V. tectus	D	B			B	
252	Common Sandpiper							
		Actitis hypoleucos			C			
256	Wood Sandpiper							
		Tringa glareola			C			
287	Spotted Thicknee							
		Burhinus capensis	A *					B
291	Cream-coloured Courser							
		Cursorius cursor	B				B	
296	Heuglin's Courser							
		Rhinoptilus cinctus	A				A	A
332	Black-faced Sandgrouse							
		Pterocles decoratus	C		F			
333	Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse							
		P. exustus						E
345	Namaqua Dove							
		Oena capensis	D	C		B 29D B Gir	D	B
347	Mourning Dove							
		Streptopelia decipiens	B				E	B
349	White-winged Dove							
		S. reichenowi						B
351	Laughing Dove							
		S. senegalensis	D		C		C	B
369	Orange-bellied Parrot							
		Poicephalus rufiventris	A 1m 1f					A
374	White-bellied Go-away Bird							
		Corythaixoides leucogaster	A			A 41B	A	A
406	White-browed Coucal							
		Centropus superciliosus			A			A
459	Speckled Mousebird							
		Colius striatus	B					B
461	Blue-naped Mousebird							
		Urocolius macrourus	B		B			B
473	Chestnut-bellied Kingfisher							
		Halcyon leucocephala	A					
487	Carmine Bee-eater							
		Merops nubicus						B
492	Somali Bee-eater							
		M. revoilii	A		A		A	
496	Lilac-breasted Roller							
		Coracias caudata	A					A

502	Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>				A	A
507	Abyssinian Scimitarbill	<i>Phoeniculus minor</i>	A		A 41B		A
508	Green Wood Hoopoe	<i>P. purpureus</i>					A
517	Von der Decken's Hornbill	<i>Tockus deckeni</i>	B		A 1f	A 1f 41b.	A
518	Red-billed Hornbill	<i>T. erythrorhynchus</i>	B		D	D 29D	
						D 41B	
520	Yellow-billed Hornbill	<i>T. flavirostris</i>			C	A 41B	A
557	d'Arnaud's Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus darnaudii</i>	A				
558	Red and Yellow Barbet	<i>T. erythrocephalus</i>					B A
583	Nubian Woodpecker	<i>Campethera nubica</i>	A		B		A
607	Chestnut-headed Sparrow Lark	<i>Emmopterix signata</i>	D				
619	Pink-breasted Lark	<i>Mirafra poecilosterna</i>	B				
644	Drongo	<i>Zicrurus adsimilis</i>	C		A	A 29D	B
649	Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>	B				
654	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>			B		
655	Cape Rook	<i>C. capensis</i>					B B
657	Brown-necked Raven	<i>C. ruficollis</i>					B
732	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	C		B		C
744	White-browed Scrub Robin	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>	B		B	A 41B	B
818	Yellow-breasted Apalis	<i>Apalis flavida</i>	B		A		
839	Grey Wren Warbler	<i>Camamoptera simplex</i>					A
877	Yellow-vented Eremomela	<i>Eremomela flavicrissalis</i>	C		A		C
878	Yellow-bellied Eremomela	<i>E. icteropygialis</i>					B
912	Pale Prinia	<i>Prinia somelica</i>	C				B
916	Red-fronted Warbler	<i>Spiloptila rufifrons</i>					C

		GARISSA	MADO GASHI	WAJIR	GIRIFTU	EL WAK	RHAMU
921	Northern Crombec						
		<i>Sylvietta brachyura</i>	B	A	B	B	B
991	African Pied Wagtail						
		<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>	B				
1012	Grey-headed Bush Shrike						
		<i>Malacothotus blanchoti</i>	B				
1020	Brubru						
		<i>Nilous afer</i>	A *	A			
1021	Rosy-patched Shrike						
		<i>Rhodophoneus cruentus</i>	B	A 1m	A	1m 1f	
1023	Three-streaked Tchagra						
		<i>Tchagra jamesi</i>	B				
1031	Taita Fiscal						
		<i>Lanius dorsalis</i>			A A Gir.	B	B
1041	White-crowned Shrike						
		<i>Eurocephalus rueppelli</i>	B	B	B 41B	B	
1043	Helmet Shrike						
		<i>Prionops plumata</i>	C	B			
1050	Golden-breasted Starling						
		<i>Cosmopsarus regius</i>	B			B	
1057	Black-breasted Glossy Starling						
		<i>Lamprolornis corruscus</i>					
1060	Ruppell's Long-tailed Glossy Starling						
		<i>L.purpuropterus</i>	B				
1073	Fischer's Starling						
		<i>Spree fischeri</i>	D	B	C	B 29D B 41B	A B
1076	Superb Starling						
		<i>S. superb</i>	D	D	D	B 29D B Gir.	D D
1078	Red-billed Oxpecker						
		<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>					B
1084	Eastern Violet-backed Sunbird						
		<i>Anthreptes orientalis</i>	B	A 1m 1f			A 1m 1f
1101	Hunter's Sunbird						
		<i>Nectarinia hunteri</i>	B	A 1m		B	
1128	Variable Sunbird						
		<i>N. venusta</i>	B			A 41B 1m 1f	C
1180	Chestnut Weaver						
		<i>Ploceus rubiginosus</i>					
1193	Red-billed Quelea						
		<i>Quelea quelea</i>	D				
1195	Red-billed Buffalo Weaver						
		<i>Bubalornis niger</i>	D	B	C	C 41B	D C
1196	White-headed Buffalo Weaver						
		<i>Dinemellia dinemelli</i>	D	B		B 29D B 41B	D C

REFERENCES

- Backhurst, G.C. 1981. *Check-list of the birds of Kenya*. Nairobi: OS-C EANHHS.
- Britton, P.L. (ed.) 1980. *Birds of East Africa their habitat, status and distribution*. Nairobi: EANHHS.
- East African Common Services Organization. 1967. *Meteorological Data Recorded at Agricultural, Hydrological, and Synoptic Stations in Kenya during the Years, 1963, 1964, and 1965*. Nairobi: E.A. Meteorological Department.
- East African Community. 1972, 1973, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977. *Meteorological Data Recorded at Agricultural, Hydrological, and Synoptic Stations in Kenya during the years 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974*. (6 vols.) Nairobi: E.A. Meteorological Department.
- East African Community. 1974. *Summary of Rainfall in Kenya for the Year 1972*. Nairobi: E.A. Meteorological Department.
- Kenya Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. 1982. *Statistical Abstract 1982*. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- Mackworth-Praed, C.W. and Grant, C.H.B. 1952, 1955. *Birds of Eastern and North Eastern Africa*. Vol. 1 & 2. London: Longmans.
- Roberts. 1978. *Birds of South Africa*. Cape Town: John Voelcker Bird Book Fund.
- Sombroek, W.G., Braun, H.M.H. and van der Pouw, B.J.A. 1982. *Exploratory Soil Survey Report No. E1*. Nairobi: Kenya Soil Survey.
- Swarzenski, W.V. and Mundorff, M.J. 1977. *Geohydrology of North Eastern Province, Kenya*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Williams, J.G. and Arlott, N. 1980. *A field guide to the birds of East Africa*. London: Collins.
- Rosalie M. Osborn, Range Management Department, Egerton College, Private Bag, P.O. Njoro.
- Adan M. Alio, Egerton College, Block E, R8, P.O. Box 97, Njoro.

A BIRD ATLAS FOR UGANDA

The bird Atlas for Kenya has reached an advanced stage, with some 40 000 records now entered and publication expected in about two years' time.

Stimulated by the success of the Kenya project, a small band of enthusiasts in Uganda has decided to follow suit. Luckily, from their point of view, Uganda is much smaller than Kenya (it has only 97 quarter-square-degrees, compared to 230), so that broad coverage is a less daunting task; and very few areas are really remote. A considerable boost was given by John Ash, who spent most of 1983 in Uganda, travelled very widely and amassed 6 200 records!

Although no plans are being made for publication, we naturally believe this to be an ultimate objective and accordingly have followed almost all of the methods developed over the past few years in the Kenya scheme. We shall give examples to show the advantages of compatability. In particular, both schemes use quarter-square-degrees (QSD's, $\frac{1}{2}^{\circ} \times \frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) as the basic unit of mapping.

There are many early records for Uganda and, as with the Kenya scheme as well as some of those in other parts of Africa, we are following a recommendation made at the Pan-African Ornithological Congress held in Malawi in 1980, to separate pre-1970 records from those made later (Ash & Pomeroy 1981). For many species, the pre-1970 records predominate, especially for 'difficult' species such as rails where sight records are particularly unsatisfactory.

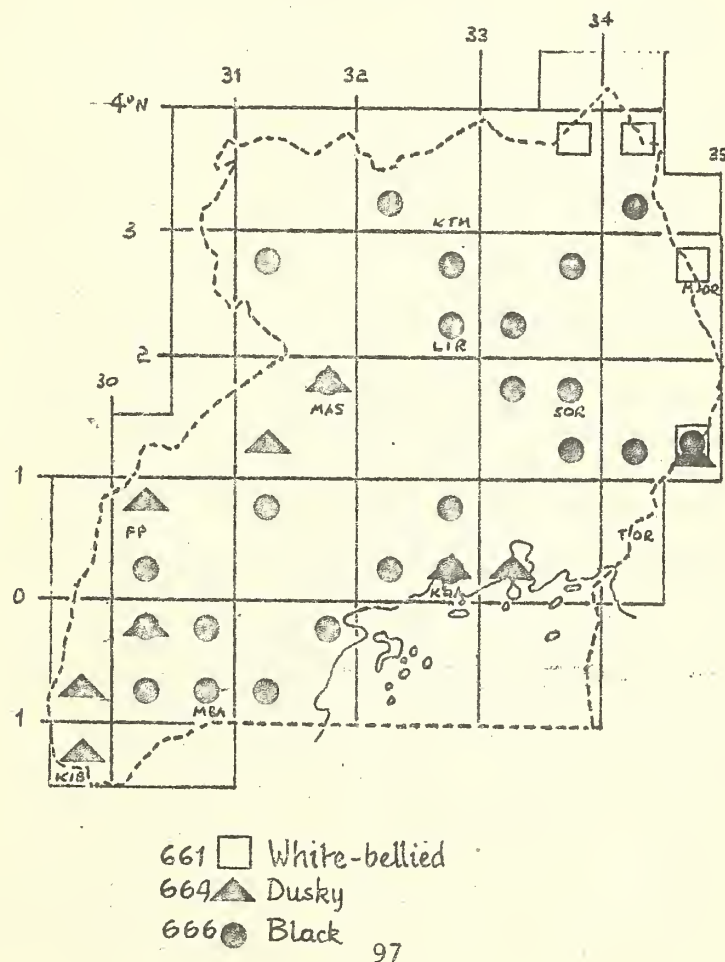
SOME EXAMPLES OF UGANDA ATLAS DATA SO FAR

Mapping distribution is particularly interesting for closely related species which are allopatric - that is, their distributions are adjacent but not as a rule overlapping (see for example Lewis & Pomeroy 1982. Fig 4.) The White-bellied Tit is widespread in Kenya, except for the coast and arid north and east. It is allopatric with the Black Tit (Britton 1980). Figur 1 shows records for both species in Uganda. Interestingly, the Kenya-Uganda border is more or less the boundary for these two species. Both have been recorded from the Mt. Elgon square, but different parts of it. (The numbers accompanying the key symbols in the Figure refer to Britton (1980), who gives scientific names. In all Figures, pre- and post-1970 records are combined.)

The Black Tit, which actually has a white soulder and white edges to some of its wing feathers, is an attractive bird, usually seen in pairs or small parties. Like its Kenyan relative it occurs in a wide range of habitats, including forest edges and woodlands. Also shown are records for for the all-black Dusky Tit, a West African forest species which is never common. Its distribution in Uganda reflects the more densely forested areas; in the east it reaches Mt. Elgon and Kakamega Forest.

The distribution of the Crowned Crane in both Kenya and Uganda is shown in Figure 2. Despite some obvious gaps in Uganda, it is clear that cranes are birds of high-rainfall areas, with a majority of breeding records from places where annual rainfall exceeds 1000 mm, and very few below 500 mm. This may also explain their absence from parts of northern Uganda, which experiences a marked dry season, but they are also rare in the wet coastal lowlands. In Uganda, Cranes are particularly common in the South and West. But whilst numerous in many places today, the ever increasing process of swamp drainage will almost certainly lead to a decline in the future. (Pomeroy, in press).

FIGURE 1
TITS



That Cranes have been recorded from 51% of the Uganda squares, but only from 29% of those in Kenya, reflects the fact that Uganda is wetter. Even the driest part of Uganda, Karamoja, receives more rain than at least half of Kenya.

A final example, taken from the Bee-eater family, shows a variety of species with very different, and almost overlapping distributions (Figure 3). The Red-throated, never recorded in Kenya, is found in woodlands in northern Uganda; and in parts of Murchison Falls National Park it is the most commonly seen species of bird. One race of the migratory Swallow-tailed Bee-eater is also found in northern Uganda, where it has bred. The other race just reaches the southern coast of Kenya - occasionally.

The striking Black Bee-eater has been recorded from several forests in western Uganda, its distribution roughly paralleled in western Kenya by the similar Blue-headed Bee-eater. Black Bee-eaters are one of the attractions of Ishasha, at the southern tip of Queen Elizabeth National Park, where there are comfortable bandas, good camp sites and a well stocked shop.

Lastly the Somali Bee-eater is a complete contrast as it occurs in semi-arid and arid areas, which explains its absence from Uganda.

Uganda, like other countries, is not without its problems but it has much to offer bird-watchers. We should be very grateful if visitors would send us their records, even of common birds, and especially breeding records. The Kampala-Entebbe area is of course well covered (with more than 550 species : Carswell, in prep.), so records from elsewhere are the most valuable. Any help along these lines will be welcome, and duly acknowledged.

FIGURE 2

194 CROWNED CRANE

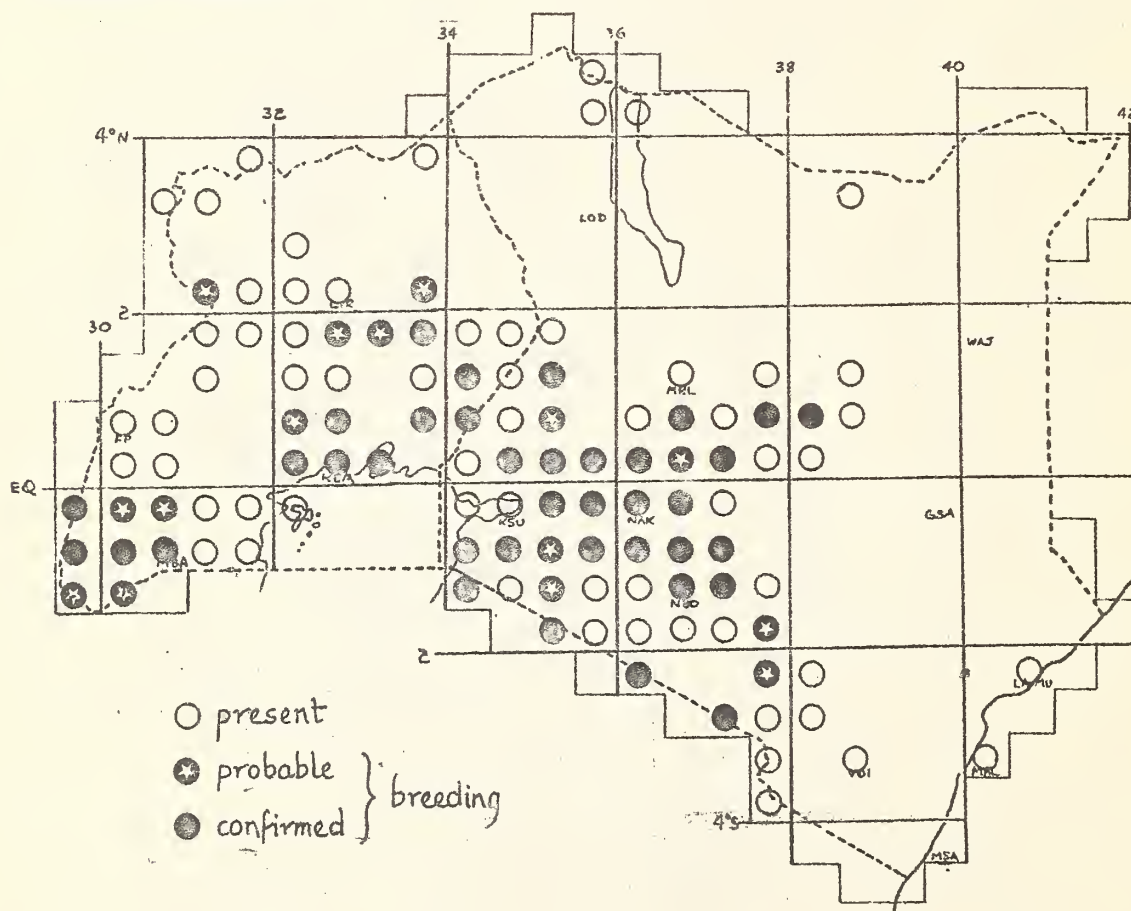
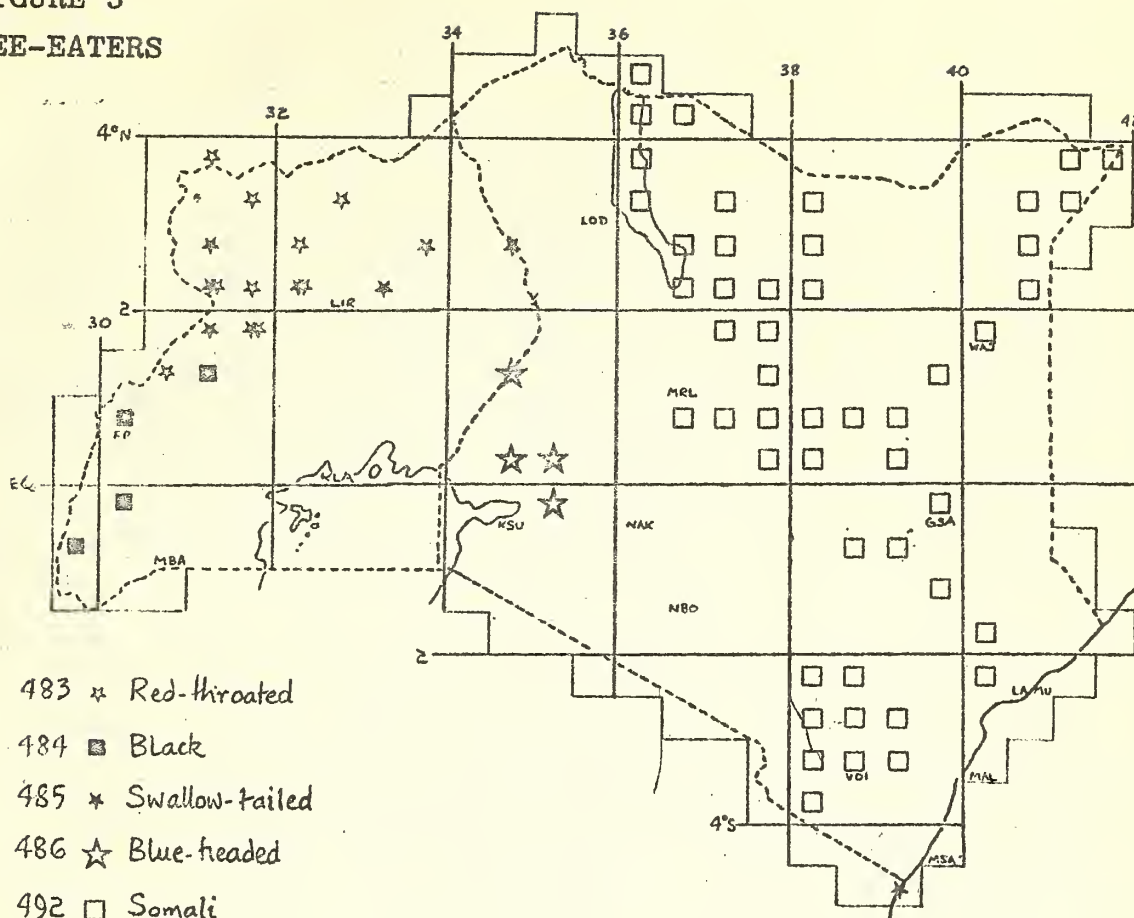


FIGURE 3
BEE-EATERS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We thank Adrian Lewis for the Kenya records.

REFERENCES

- Ash, J.S. and Pomeroy, D.E. 1981. Mapping schemes in the Afrotropical region. *Scopus* 5: 36-38.
- Britton, P.L. (Ed.) 1980. *Birds of East Africa their habitat, status and distribution*. Nairobi: EANHHS.
- Carswell, M. (In prep.). *The Birds of Kampala*.
- Lewis, A.D. and Pomeroy, D.E. 1982. A bird atlas for Kenya: Further progress. *EANHHS Bulletin*. 1982: 86-91.
- Pomeroy, D.E. (In press). The ecology and status of Crowned Cranes *Balearica regulorum* in East Africa. *Proceedings of the International Crane Workshop, India, 1983*.

Margaret Carswell, Box 7051, Kampala and Derek Pomeroy, Department of Zoology, Makerere University, Box 7062, Kampala.

BIRDS AND THE DROUGHT AT MIOTONI, KAREN

This year the 'long' rains failed, to date (26 July) we have received less than six inches (150 mm). However, a shower was experienced on 20 July but see below.

Many trees are leafless, particularly the crotons *Croton megalacarpus*, the dominant tree in my forest. This is the period of maximum leaf-fall and the only real green is to be found on the few fig trees. The dam is drying up rapidly. On a survey over the four hectares I found only a few indigenous plants in flower, a few stricken yellow *Aspillia* sp. and a mauve nectarless *Ipomoea*. There was little in the way of exotic flowering trees and plants. A few sprays of silver oak *Grevillia robusta* which provide nectar. Few other nectar flowers are available, a few on purple cestrum *Cestrum purpureum* and on purple and scarlet garden salvia. Some flowers remain on the scarlet *Euphorbia fulgens* and there is a single crane flower *Strelitzia reginae* which provides nectar and pollen. The last nectar resource is the bouganvillia.

No fruiting indigenous trees were located and only a few half and less than half grown fruit are available on the single shrub of *Hamelia patens*, so fruit eaters are hard pressed. No or little grain is available for the granivorous species.

Insectivorous species are having a hard time too. Lawns are dry and bare in patches with few insects or spiders to be found. The Hadada *Bostrychia hagedash* has searched the lawns without much success. Search has revealed few caterpillars but the leaf mould in the forest produces a few leaflitter species such as cockroaches and crickets. The White-eyed Slaty Flycatchers *Melaenornis chocolatina*, usually three pairs, appear to have deserted us.

Supplementary rations have been provided at the bird table. We have run out of 'mwele' (millet) and as the price of a kilo has sky-rocketed, we have resorted to sprinkling a proprietary brand of dog food on the ground in lieu of grain, though finely ground, the birds have accepted this alternative but they have to work hard for a crop full.

My troop of seventeen Syke's Monkeys *Cercopithecus mitis* have attacked the avocado trees by the house and they are notoriously wasteful, one bite at a hard unripe fruit and it is discarded, the ground is littered with fruit but they are collected up daily, stored until ripe then cut in half and the flesh well criss crossed with a knife and placed on the bird table where they are much appreciated by the fruit eaters. It is amazing how the birds find such to be acceptable.

Three small plastic containers have been fixed to the large purple salvia, one transparent, another covered in red cloth and the third is blue. These are filled with honey water and replenished regularly. My method is as follows: dip a knife blade into a jar of excellent Kitui honey and remove as much as possible, dip into a 300 ml jar of water, stir vigorously until all the honey is dissolved. This provides around 4 - 5% solution of mixed sugar fractions, which is better than a straight saturated solution of local cane sugar. Sunbirds and other species readily find and sip the honey water irrespective of the colour of the containers.

Water is always available in the bird bath and is topped up regularly and more often if the monkeys have paid a visit. As soon as the bath is filled each morning, along comes the White-starred Forest Robin *Pogonocichla stellata* and a party of Olive Mountain Greenbuls *Phyllastrephus placidus*, each takes a series of quick dips and away to hunt for spiders, creeping round tree trunks and peering into cracks and crevices. These are forest species.

Our observation area is all that part of the garden that can be viewed from our morning room windows with, in front, the table and bath, the *Hamelia*, salvias, euphorbia and bouganvillia, all within a couple of metres, and up to ten metres

across the lawn to the big bamboo clump. That is the background for the following observations.

Regular visitors are three to four pairs of Baglafaecht Weaver (Reichenow's Weaver) *Ploceus baglafaecht* and a pair of Holub's Weaver *P. xanthops*; a 'multitude of mannikins', Bronze *Lonchura cucullata* a hundred or more sometimes, several Streaky Seed-eaters *Serinus striolatus*, a pair of Olive Thrushes *Turdus abyssinicus*; a pair of Common Bulbuls *Pycnonotus barbatus*, of which one is ringed and banded 'red-red' and which is now over seven years old. Sunbirds at nectar are the Bronze, Amethyst, Northern Double-collared, Variable and Collared *Nectarinia kilimensis*, *N. amethystina*, *N. proussi*, *N. venusta* and *Anthroptes collaris*. They have their preferences, the Amethyst and Northern Double-collared always visit the purple cestrum and salvia first then proceed to the red flowers, the other species prefer the red flowers and then go to the purple.

The thrush comes for bread or to hunt amongst the plants, turning over leaves with its beak or scraping with its feet. The 'Glass-eye' (Grey-backed Camaroptera) *Camaroptera brachyura* seeks tiny insects or small caterpillars.

The White-browed Robin Chat *Cossypha heuglini* is an irregular visitor as is the Thick-billed Seed-eater *Serinus burtoni* which nibbles the senescent foliage of the salvia but also takes Hamelia fruit.

The effects of the drought have altered the picture greatly; the regulars still come but outstanding forest species have appeared on the scene. Generally shy and seldom seen, we have now regularly, taking the half ripe fruit of Hamelia, Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Andropadus latirostris*, Slender-billed Greenbul *Andropadus graciliroastris* and the Yellow-bellied Greenbul *faviventris*, a species not seen for a very long time. The Yellow-whiskered snatches a fruit while hovering and then dives into the bush to swallow then searches for another. All these greenbuls have now accepted the avacado as a good substitute and there is often competition with the common bulbul and the weavers for these fruit. They compete with the thrush, the Streaky Seed-eaters which mandibulate the fruit and discard the epidermis whereas the Thick-billed Seed-eater eats the whole fruit. A Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* appears regularly and takes the hamelia fruit now that there are no fruit on the semi-parasitic mistletoes *Viscum* and *Loranthus* spp. which are their normal main food items. Both species of White-eye, the Montane and Abyssinian *Zosterops polioogastra* and *Z. abyssinica* come regularly, often as a mixed flock, sometimes up to twenty birds at a time may be seen feeding in the Hamelia.

The half avacado has been a success with the thrush particularly which simply picks up a segment and takes it below the Hamelia to hide and feast in peace. The White-eyes have yet to try this delicacy but doubtless they will in time.

Out of the forest have come a single Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* to seek grain and the elusive 'startle-the-hunter', the Lemon Dove *Aplopelia larvata*. It was particularly pleasing to watch the Lemon Dove at such close quarters, walking and searching with head bobbing forward with each step, Croton seeds are the main item of diet for this bird and they frequent my son's and my driveway where the fruit fall and are crushed by vehicles, thus exposing the hard seeds. We now collect these fruit and crush them as a supply for the birds. These seeds are also taken by the Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*. Seeds and fruit have also to be shared with the Giant Forest Rat *Cricetomys gambianus* which have warrens in the forest. These are littered with croton fruit which the rats gnaw open to fill their cheek pouches and take down to their underground storage chambers.

We have a few strangers around too. For two days we were visited by a male Black-headed or Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus* the first ever recorded on the plot since 1934, this bird fed with the mannikins on grain and 'dog-food'. Another first for the plot was the Pale Flycatcher *Bradornis pallidus* normally a bird of the acacia bush country, certainly not of a well wooded garden.

It is odd how so many birds have taken to eating quite foreign and unnatural food items. Of crumbled and slightly damp bread Reichenow's Weaver takes

scraps, flies off to a perch and by one foot holds down the piece while it nibbles. Honey water is taken not only by the sunbirds but readily by the Common Bulbul and Reichenow's Weaver, but this in part is understandable as the latter often drinks nectar from more open flowers such as Grevillia, sisal and the Australian *Acrocarpus fraxinifolius* (note. All exotics). Amethyst and Variable sunbirds have discovered how to extract nectar from the complex and extraordinary flowers of the Crane Flower, as has the weaver.

The drought 'bonanza' for the birds at Miotoni occurred on the evening of 20 July when we experienced a freak rain storm at 19.30 h with a fall of 3.85 mm which induced the alate termites *Odontotermes* to emerge. They swarmed around the security lights and I had two thoughts - collect up the insects to examine them for the predacious parasitic *Bengalia* sp. fly, and to accumulate a food supply for the birds. With brush and pan plus a large plastic basin I swept up, with some soil, some 2 kg of termites. *Bengalia* flies were present and feeding on the termites.

Early the next day, Saturday, I prepared the honeywater, spread the 'dog-food', cut the avocado halves, filled the bird bath then tipped some soil and termites onto the bird table and scattered some on the ground. At 07.30 h the first bird to arrive was a female Reichenow's Weaver which quickly ate 14 termites, some of which had not yet shed their wings, these she took to a perch where, the insect held down by one foot, the wings were pulled off and the body swallowed. A family of mannikins arrived with a male and female Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura* (the male whydah without the long tail streamers which had been shed over the previous ten days) and these birds quickly found the termites on the ground, breaking them up into small pieces before swallowing. Next to arrive was a Yellow-whiskered Greenbul which took some termites and dived into the bush to eat and then returned for more. A male and female Reichenow's Weaver arrived and fed, each taking 17 insects. But that was that and the birds disappeared.

Now de-alated termites usually form couples or multiple pairs, females being followed nose to tail by males. These then try and find a spot into which to dig to form a nuptial chamber just below soil surface. I decided to search for such chambers and was readily rewarded for here I expected to find termites plus *Bengalia* eggs. I searched the lawn below the security lights and found many small soil mounds but some of these had already been disturbed with no termites present, but I found the culprit, the thrush. I watched it approach a soil mound, look, clearly it listened with head slightly on one side, then with rapid movements of the bill the soil was removed to reveal the insects which were quickly devoured. This in part provided some answer as to why the birds at the table had so suddenly disappeared - there were termites all over the garden and even out on the main road with many drowned in pools, so there was no necessity to concentrate on my offerings.

I examined many scores of these mounds in the grass picking up the inmates, couples, threes, fours and even up to ten insects in one chamber. These were bottled for further examination.

Sunday 22 July, the same procedure of putting out the food, this at 07.20 h. First to arrive and quite unexpected was a female Amethyst Sunbird which quickly captured five termites, breaking each up with much effort before swallowing the pieces. A male appeared, hovered over the table but did not take an insect. Next came, in a bunch, a pair of Yellow-whiskered Greenbuls, a pair of Holub's Weavers, and a swarm of mannikins - much to do and competition, more so when a pair of Reichenow's arrived in aggressive mood. A White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher arrived at the table, soon caught on and feasted. Quite unexpected was the arrival of three Olive Mountain Greenbuls who quickly discovered the insects. The female Amethyst returned, unconcernedly hopping on the ground amongst the other birds. A pair of Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus* arrived, they took termites but were immediately robbed by the mannikins, but they persisted and eventually obtained a share.

Slender-billed and Yellow-whiskered Greenbuls arrived to join the throng but the thrush was late, took one termite, but it was aloof and as few termites were left it flew off.

It was the Reichenow's Weavers which showed acumen and an activity I had not previously noted. They worked the debris on the table and on the ground, peering under small lumps of soil and pushing these up with the bill or with side to side sweeps of the bill as they unearthed more termites that had hidden themselves away.

Monday, 23 July at 07.15. First along was a male Northern Double-collared Sunbird which snatched an alate and was followed by a Yellow-whiskered Greenbul which took a dozen insects. A male Reichenow Weaver was feeding on the table. A single termite was taken by the 'Glass-eye'. Mannikins arrived, then the Yellow-vented Bulbuls to feast at the table and so it went on until no more termites remained.

It had rained overnight, around 7.7 mm I judged by the pools on the road, as the rain gauge had been knocked over by the monkeys and I had no check. These were the sort of events over the next two days

So next time the termites fly, out with the brush and pan and have a large plastic basin handy. Store the insects in jars and put in the fridge, food for another day and we hope not a drought day when food is scarce. Dead or alive the birds will appreciate a meal of termites.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Department of Ornithology, National Museums of Kenya, Box 40658, Nairobi.

- - - - -

SIDE-STRIPED JACKAL

On 18 July, 1984 at about 09.00 h driver Stephen Mutua of Governor's Camp and I observed an adult and an immature Side-striped Jackal *Canis adustus* feeding on a small piece of carrion. They were on an open grassy hillside about 2 km east of Governor's Camp. They would appear to have been a mother and her three-quarter grown cub. They allowed us to approach within photographic range before running off. Both animals had very clear white tips to their tails.

I submit this observation as neither Stephen nor I had seen Side-striped Jackal in the Mara before though it appears that this pair have recently quite frequently been seen by other drivers.

Eric Risley, Box 24751, Nairobi.

- - - - -

THE NANDI BEAR

No doubt many of us have heard mention of the mysterious Nandi Bear, but I for one cannot remember seeing anything of substance in print. Recently, however, I came across the notes made by Richard Meinertzhagen on 12 July 1905, in his diary.

He recorded that all the Nandi he had questioned on the subject said that the animal was very hairy and sometimes stood on two legs. When asked to trace the outline they always showed it in the erect position. Additionally they had told him that when they first came into the area, some hundreds of

years ago, it was said to be common.

At the time of receiving this information Meinertzhagen imagined the animal was some sort of anthropoid which had become extinct because of a decrease in rainfall over the area. This was confirmed, he says by a curious coincidence. Upon the occasion of the coronation of Edward VII, in Britain, five men of the King's African Rifles were sent to join in the celebrations, and one of them was a Nandi. Whilst in England their programme included a visit to a zoo, and upon being introduced to a chimpanzee the Nandi soldier exclaimed with delight, "There is the Nandi bear!".

Maybe, as can be the case with the shyer animals, the Nandi bear moved to remoter places as the area it inhabited became subjected to the pressures of man.

No doubt the mystery was a fairly common topic of conversation at the turn of the century and I wonder just how the subject first came to the ears of the early Europeans in the area.

REFERENCE

Meinertzhagen, R. 1957. *Kenya Diary 1902-1906*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd.

Peter Squelch, Box 24220, Nairobi.

A PLANT TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ANTS

We are all familiar with the oval, bald patches that occur in dry grassland in Kenya. They are several metres across and usually have in the centre a small pile of gravel mixed with the husks of grass seeds. Within the patch the soil is completely bare, all plants having been removed down to the last shred.

The bald patches overlie the nests of the harvesting ant *Messor cephalotes* (Emery), and you can see the busy streams of satiny, reddish ants converging along tracks through the grass, and disappearing down a small hole or holes in middle of the bald patch. No one seems to know why the ants make the bald patches, but it may be to regulate the temperature and/or humidity in the seed stores underground.

At Ilkek, near Gilgil in the Rift Valley, the grassland is dotted with these bald patches. However, a few of them instead of being bare support a thick mat of a leafy, creeping plant, one of the Curcubitaceae, with tiny greenish flowers and small, hard globular fruit about the size of a Cape Gooseberry. The texture of the stems and the finely divided leaves is extremely harsh, resembling nothing so much as emery paper.

I took this plant to the East African Herbarium, where it was identified as *Myrmecosicyos messorius* C. Jeffrey. According to Agnew (1974) *Upland Kenya Wild Flowers*, this is "A rare endemic - - dependent upon harvester ants - - for its survival, for it has been found only on the bare ground around their nests" (p.177).

I wonder what effect the plant has on the ants nest? The ants would surely not go to the trouble of clearing the bald patches unless they have some function. Whatever it is, this unwanted thatch must interfere. The plant is apparently taking advantage of the total lack of competition from other plants in this very restricted habitat. I imagine that the ants' attempts to remove the plant are foiled by its abrasive texture.

Jo Darlington, c/o Section of Entomology, National Museums of Kenya,
Box 40653, Nairobi.

MORE ABOUT HORNBILLS AND MONKEYS

In the *Bulletin* of May/June 1984 (*EANHS Bulletin* 1984: 58), Adrian Lewis made some interesting comments relating to an earlier report of Grey Hornbills *Tockus nasutus* associating with Olive Baboons *Papio cynocephalus* near Lake Magadi, Kenya, by Michael Gore (*EANHS Bulletin* 1981: 115).

In 1981, I observed two Grey Hornbills with Tantalus Monkeys *Cercopithecus aethiops tantalus* in savannah near Kaduna, Central Nigeria, and feel that I have heard of other sightings of this type. Certainly, Williams and Arlott in the *Collins Guide to the Birds of East Africa* and Guggisburg in his book mention the association of White-crested Hornbills *Tropicranus albocristatus* with Colobus Monkeys; and Mackworth-Praed and Grant also allude to this but do not specify the Colobus species involved.

As suggested by Michael Gore, it is probable that the association of the latter insectivorous hornbills with monkeys is for the purpose of preying on insects and the like, disturbed by the monkeys. However, on a number of occasions I have seen (and heard) large forest hornbills such as Black and White Casqued Hornbills *Bycanistes subcylindricus* and Yellow Casqued Hornbills *Ceratogymna elata* with forest monkeys e.g. Mona Monkeys *Cercopithecus mona*, in high forest of the Oban Hills, S.E. Nigeria. In this case, I imagine the apparent association is solely due to a mutual attraction to a tree bearing ripe figs or other fruit; both parties being largely frugivorous.

Colin Ryall, Box 83692, Mombasa.

BREEDING OF VERREAUX'S EAGLE OWL PREVENTED BY CROWS

On reviewing our bird diary, I came across something which may be worth recording. Through the years 1977 and 1984 in Mwituu Estate, Karen, we used to hear Verreaux's Eagle Owl *Bubo lacteus* quite often. Occasionally we saw one of these owls.

In August 1982, a pair of owls attempted to breed in the garden. The pair were first seen, on an unrecorded date, late in July or early in August by our gardener. Two birds were together on an abandoned nest. This nest has been used every year before and since, by a pair of Black Kites *Milvus migrans* who have reared their young successfully several times. Our observations, recorded in our diary, with regard to Verreaux's Eagle Owl are as follows.

5 August 1982 - One Verreaux's Eagle Owl seen in the nest about 25 m above ground. Observation period was approximately 1½ hours before sunset. During this time, several interactions took place between a pair of Pied Crows *Corvus albus* and the eagle owl.

6 August 1982 - Owl sitting on the nest throughout the day.

7 August 1982 - Two owls were seen, one sitting on the nest and the other one was perching in a nearby tree. Upon arrival of a pair of crows the owl which was perched in the tree near the nest tried to intercept the crows and to distract them by flying low above the nest and then flew in tight circles above the nest and the crows. Then the owl flew to his perch. This interaction was repeated many times and lasted for about an hour. The owl which was sitting on the nest remained there motionless throughout the observation period (16.30 to 18.30 h).

8 August 1982 - After a downpour at 17.30 h, both owls were perching in a tree near the nest when the crows arrived and flew straight to the nest where

they were intercepted by the larger of the two owls (presumably the female). This owl sat on the nest and remained there motionless. The crows started to 'bump' the male owl and actually flew into him several times. The owl did not defend himself, but flew from branch to branch pursued by the crows. At nightfall the crows departed..

9 August 1982 - The nest was not occupied. The owls had left.

The owls were not seen or heard for several months after this episode.

Imre J.P. Loeffler, Box 47964, Nairobi.

THE ONE-DAY WORLD RECORD COUNT FOR BIRDS

The article entitled 'Kenya breaks big-day birding marathon record' cannot go unchallenged! In about 1972, if I remember correctly, Patricia and Michael Fogden recorded 297 in one day in Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda. They also believed that 300 + in a day would be possible. The record was the more impressive because it was achieved within a single National Park.

Of course one should not take these things too seriously, but for the fun of it, who would like to top the following, all 'records' by myself. Each refers to a single terrestrial habitat, and no vehicles were involved. (More species in a given time are usually possible in good aquatic habitats).

10 minutes - 21 species, Karongo Farm

30 minutes - 33 species, Ruiru Golf Club

60 minutes - 49 species, Karongo Farm.

D.E. Pomeroy, Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda.

REVIEW

TWO BOOKS ON VOLCANOES

Beyond the collecting of rocks, minerals and fossils, of which at least the last is illegal here in Kenya, the science of Geology tends to be largely ignored by many amateur naturalists, often because it entails at least some knowledge of involved and obscure concepts, so that many superb and intriguing geology texts tend to be in language that is too specialised for the layman (for a marvellous exception to this, see Celia Nyamweru's *Rifts and Volcanoes: a study of the East African rift system* (publ. Nelson Africa; available at any good bookshop at Sh.60 or so), which is a thoroughly well written and explained account of much East African geology, including simple progression to global concepts, suggestions for further reading and a very useful glossary of geological terms). Particularly here in the tropics, of course, geology is at the further disadvantage that there is usually more striking and immediate pleasure to be had in, for example, the beauty of a rare flower or the activity and fascination of a special bird or animal.

Thus, beyond special minerals and especially gemstones, or fossils, the contemplation of, for example, the rift valley's faults or volcanoes has but a limited attraction. But volcanoes are amongst geology's most dynamic and at times awesome features, and we in Kenya are fortunate that all those we see are dormant or extinct, since further eruptions on the scale of the not

too distant past could make life here, at least in the highlands, largely untenable. At the same time though we have no opportunity to appreciate these impressive, albeit relatively minute, expressions of our planet's immense internal power: the output of electricity from the Olkaria geothermal power station near Naivasha, which is already providing a substantial percentage of Kenya's needs, is really our only indication of the vast power and activity that here, near the continental split that is the Rift Valley, lie only a few kilometres beneath our feet.

Here we have two very different books about volcanoes both valuable in their own ways. The first, *Volcanoes of the World*, compiled by T. Simkin, L. Siebert, L. McClelland, D. Bridge, C. Newhall and J.F. Latter and published by the Smithsonian Institution, is an exhaustive reference work to all the volcanoes on the Earth that are believed to have been active during the last 10 000 years. This enormous bulk of information is of necessity largely coded, and the clearly written and very useful introductory sections fully amplify the use of the various directories, as well as touching upon fascinating topics like dendrochronology (the dating of eruptions by their effect on trees' annual growth rings) and lichenometry (the dating of recent lava flows using the extent of their lichen encrustation), as well as the horrifying aspects of eruptions, such as the huge tsunami sea waves, and the *Nuees ardentes*, which are "hot glowing avalanches that move down slopes at hurricane speeds, devastating all living things in their path" - do you still wish that we had some active volcanoes?

The main body of this book are the four data collections:
DIRECTORY - 1343 volcanoes believed active in the last 10 000 years. Arranged by region, with locations, heights, types, known eruptive histories and behavioural characteristics.
CHRONOLOGY - 5564 eruptions from 8 000 B.C. through (not my Americanese) 1980 A.D. Arranged chronologically, with durations, explosive magnitudes, and volumes of products.
GAZETTEER - 5345 cross-referenced volcanoes namesynonyms and feature names.
BIBLIOGRAPHY - 709 sources for more detailed information arranged chronologically by region.

This does not, of course, make for the moistest of reading, but it is undeniably an enormous compilation of data and a very comprehensive reference tome.

The second of these book is very different: *Krakatau 1883: the volcanic eruption and its effects* by Tom Simkin and Richard S. Fiske, has been published (also by the Smithsonian Institution) to mark the centenary of the largest and most catastrophic volcanic eruption of historical times: on 26-27 August 1883, on the island of Krakatau or Krakatoa, in the Sunda Straits between Sumatra and Java. This book has everything. There are marvellous old prints of steamships swept miles inland, colour paintings of the fabulous sunsets that the volcano's ash produced whilst in orbit around the Earth; then eyewitness accounts, transcripts of telegrams - "Serang in total darkness all morning - stones falling. Villages near Anjer washed away", facts and figures - 36 417 people killed, the Sun turned blue or green, sea waves reaching 40 metres above sea level and carrying 600 ton blocks of coral ashore, the explosion heard over 1/13th of the Earth's surface: do you *still* wish that we had active volcanoes in Kenya?

Then there is the first English translation of an important 1885 monograph on the eruption, accounts of subsequent eruptions (including a stunning photographic sequence of a thousand metre high cloud of dust rising in 36 seconds, very much like an atomic bomb, from a previously tranquil landscape) and summaries of all the scientific papers on the geology, the air and sea waves caused by the blast, the atmospheric effects, the climatic effects and the biology, a full bibliography and an index.

All in all, a thoroughly fascinating, well produced book for anyone with an interest in natural events: delve into it and become absorbed
Both these books are now in our library.

Adrian D. Lewis, Geology, Box 30197, Nairobi

SOCIETY VISIT TO ELSAMERE CONSERVATION CENTRE

Twenty one members of the EANHS visited Joy Adamson's home, Elsamere, over the weekend of 11/12 August 1984, and were able to experience, as Joy's searching, tempestuous and talented spirit must often have done, its serenity and beauty.

It is a gem of a place, by a jewel of a lake. Large yellow-barked acacias frame the pearl-grey lake, and the lawn is lush and green. A pair of fish eagles in the acacia canopy, heads thrown back, gave their loud ringing challenge intermittently throughout the weekend, a sound which for me will always recall the sights and sounds of Africa to mind. As a bonus, a grey-capped warbler, hidden in the tangled creepers, sang his heart out. The acacias also provide an appropriate setting for the graceful gymnastics of a small group of Colobus monkeys that live around the Centre, and who came for an early morning treat of potato peelings. They reminded me of a group of soberly dressed church elders, white hair peeking out from dark caps, peering bad-temperedly at a group of admiring sinners on the ground below.

The accommodation is charming and comfortable, and the reception from Enid and Jock Dawson, the wardens of the centre, made us feel like welcome friends. Enid's splendid catering and concern as to whether or not we had had enough to eat, completed the home-from-home feeling.

There is a small museum in the main building housing memorabilia depicting Joy's many and extraordinary talents, with fine photographs of the animals in her life and many small and simple things that must have had much meaning for the owner, that the visitor can only guess at.

The Dawsons organised a safari into Hell's Gate. Enid was so disappointed that only one family had a 4-wheel drive car, as she said there was a rather difficult but most spectacular route that Jock would have shown us, but the 'easy' route we took probably had hazards enough for the layman, with panoramic views and animal sightings enough to thrill the most jaded palate. Jock is an ex-hunter and with the naked eye could spot game that was difficult to find with binoculars, and because of his expertise we had fine views of Steinbok and Chandlers Mountain Reedbuck the same colour as the drought-brown hill, standing as still as a stone. There was plenty of plains game dotted around, Grants, Tommy, Eland and many, many Kongoni. There were also many Masai with their cattle, desperately seeking grazing. There had been a couple of showers and one good downpour, so the grass was beginning to shoot.

We drove as far as was possible up the gorge, to the place where the Sheena film unit had wreaked havoc. They had cut out a wide 'staircase' down to the stream bed, which was a nice bonus for us for easy access, though what damage it will do to the habitat when the rains do eventually come, is anyone's guess.

We re-traced our route to reach our hill top destination, where we ate our fill on the picnic fare provided by Enid, sating our sight on the marvellous views.

All in all, an enjoyable, interesting and highly successful outing, and our thanks to Barbara Bryan for organising it.

Dorothea Brass, Box 59196, Nairobi

WARNING: CONTINUED DANGER FROM LIONS
IN THE ABERDARE MOUNTAINS

For some time now, there has been a ban on camping in the Aberdare National Park due to problems with lions around the campsites, but this was thought to have been alleviated to some extent by the capture and transfer of some of the animals.

However, on 20 May 1984, the following incident occurred, which we bring to the notice of anyone contemplating out-of-car activity in the higher areas of the Park, where walking is normally permitted.

The details are too horrific to dwell upon, but in summary a woman has been severely mauled by a single lion at the picnic site at the Chania Bridge, as she was walking along the path that leads to the Chania Falls viewing platform. A car was driven at the lion which thereupon dropped the woman, suggesting that she was about to be dragged off as prey.

Thus please be aware that, for the moment, any walking, hiking, fishing, birdwatching etc. indeed any activity that involves leaving your vehicle for even limited periods, particularly in the Chania Falls area, could be exceedingly dangerous.

Adrian, D. Lewis, Vice-Chairman, E.A.N.H.S.

SOCIETY NOTICES

LIBRARY LUNCHTIME OPENING HOURS: The Joint Library of the E.A.N.H.S. and the National Museums will now be open at lunchtime on Monday and Friday to coincide with the opening days of the Society office. This will be for a trial period of three months, after which the situation will be reviewed and if the library is not well patronised during these times, the facility will cease. So this is an appeal for members to use their excellent library.

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS: The latest issue of the journal has been numbered 190 in error. It SHOULD be 180 and the next Journal part will be No.181.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE: The Society has a stock of various interesting books on Natural History and reprints of Journal papers for sale as well as other scientific papers. A recent addition is the various parts of the Flora of Tropical East Africa. These are published as separate papers for each family and published by the Ministry of Overseas Development. Prices vary from Sh.7/- to 110/- per paper.

NEW SECRETARY AND ASSISTANTS NEEDED URGENTLY: As detailed in the last Bulletin, the present Secretary, Mrs Barbara Bryan, is leaving Kenya in September, so the Society would appreciate the assistance of any member for the position of Secretary and any volunteers to assist the Secretary. The job involves keeping the office open during three half days per week, attending monthly executive committee meetings, duplicating the bi-monthly Bulletin, handling correspondence and keeping the membership records up-to-date. An honorarium is paid monthly as an appreciation of the work involved..

If no person is forthcoming, the office will have to CLOSE, yet again, until such time as someone can be found to continue with the job. This could be as soon as 10 September. Please contact the Chairman, Prof. J. Kokwaro, Box 30197, Nairobi if YOU can help or if you know of anyone else who might be interested.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP: The Chairman has nominated five people from Uganda for special membership of the Society. They are;

Mr Michael Oneko, Uganda Institute of Ecology, Box 3530, Kampala, Uganda.

Mr Justus Tindigarukayo-Kashagire, Game Department, Box 4, Entebbe, Uganda.

Mr Jonathan Baranga, Zoology Dept. Makerere University, Box 7062, Kampala.

Miss Dorothy Eroori National Research Council, Box 6884, Kampala.

Mr Joseph Buruga, Botany Dept. Makerere University, Box 7062, Kampala.

FOR SALE: "Sounds of Nature in the African Rain Forests" (Double long-playing record - recorded by Stuart Keith. Published by Federation of Ontario Naturalists & the American Museum of Natural History, 1971. Price Sh.90/- available from the Society Office.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

MONDAY 1st October, 1984: In the Museum Hall at 5.30 p.m. Adrian Lewis will give a talk entitled "The Kenya bird atlas: the results". For well over three years now, well over 200 of you who now have the *Bulletin* in your hands have found nothing better to do with life than fill in bird atlas checklists, and to submit them to a faceless disaster that can only reply with vague but nonetheless impertinent enquiries as to the strength of your collection of bifocals, the history of hallucination in your forebears, or which end of your doubtless appalling binoculars you actually squint down. Well, now the chance of retribution: do come along on October 1, SEE the disaster and feel free to laugh, hurl ridicule, eggs or rotten fruit but, ABOVE ALL, come and see some of the mountain of results that is accumulating from what is essentially YOUR project.

WEDNESDAY MORNING bird walks continue, led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Please meet at the National Museum at 8.45 a.m. sharp.

INFORMAL "Pot Luck" outings are held on the second Sunday of each month. Mrs Ng'weno cannot always lead them, but members wishing to participate are invited to attend with good ideas as to where to go, and are asked to invite one of their number to lead them if Mrs Ng'weno is unavailable on that day.

With regard to the Society talks, attendance in recent months has been highly variable. The Functions Organizer is appealing for 'feedback' as to reasons why this should be so: whether the time of 5.30 p.m. is not convenient for most people: whether the topics discussed are outwith the general interest or whether a talk every month is too frequent. It is sad but true that the reception to certain speakers of late has been very poor and, bearing in mind that these individuals have put time and effort for the occasion, a lack of response is both disappointing and detrimental to the society in general.

As Functions Organizer, I should be delighted to receive any views on this subject from members and, if possible, any ideas or suggestions for forthcoming talks and excursions.

Graham D.F. Reid, Box 30197, Nairobi.

THE EAST AFRICAN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Chairman: Prof. J.O. Kokwaro

Vice-Chairman: Dr. A.D. Lewis

Joint Editors: JI E. African Nat. History Soc. Nat. Mus: Dr. J.J. Hebrard and Dr. D. Widdowson

Secretary: Mrs. B. Bryan

Treasurer: Dr. S.G. Njuguna

Hon. Librarian: Miss P. Allen

Executive Committee: (in addition to the above) Mr. G.C. Backhurst (Ringin Organisr), Mr. N.K. arap Chumo, Dr. D.J. Pearson, Mr. D.K. Richards, Mr. D.A. Turner.

Co-opted Members: Mr. P. Davey, Mrs. J. Hayes, Mr. J.S. Karmali, Mrs. F. Ng'weno, Mrs. A.L. Campbell, Dr. C. Gakahu

Journal Editorial Sub-Committee: Dr. J.J. Hebrard, Dr. D. Widdowson.

Ornithological Sub-Committee: Dr. D.J. Pearson, D.A. Turner, G.C. Backhurst, Dr. A.D. Lewis, T. Stevenson, D.K. Richards, Dr. M.E. Smalley, Dr. K.M. Howell & N.E. Baker (Tanzania), Dr. M.J. Carswell, Prof. D.E. Pomeroy (Uganda), B.S. Meadows, J.S.S. Beesley & J.F. Reynolds (United Kingdom).

Joint Library Sub-Committee: (Society representatives) Miss P. Allen & Mr. N. arap Chumo.

Nest Record Scheme Organisr: Mr. P.B. Taylor

Bulletin Editor: Mrs. D. Backhurst

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the Joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation; wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the EANHS Bulletin every two months; a copy of each Journal published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers and runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes The Journal of the East African Natural History Society and National Museum. Each issue consists of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated magazine issued six times a year, which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to The Editor (EANHS Bulletin), Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article. Photographs cannot be published.

SCOPUS

The Ornithological Sub-Committee publishes this bird journal five times a year. Cost: EANHS members KShS.75/- p.a. All correspondence to D.A. Turner, Box 48019, Nairobi, Kenya

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	LOCAL	OVERSEAS
Institutional (schools, libraries) . . . annual payment:	KShs.100/-	US\$ 11.00 £st. 7.00
Full Local and overseas . . . annual payment:	KShs.100/-	US\$ 11.00 £st. 7.00
Junior (full-time student, no Journal supplied) . . . annual payment:	K.Shs.10/-	US\$ 4.00 £st. 2.50
Life Membership.....	KShs.1500/-	US\$ 144.00 £st.90.00

Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join for KShs.50/- and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION LIBRARIES



3 9088 01230 2949